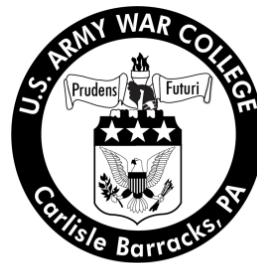


A Legion Apart

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2012

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

A LEGION APART

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Senior Government and Military Leaders have recently expressed concern over the growing gap between America's Military and the public it protects. The demographic of the Armed Forces is no longer representative of the entire population, and the disparity between the guarded and their guardian's leads to a lack of understanding of what the military does when it is not directly on a T.V. screen in America's living rooms. The American Military is a highly professional force but has become more of a private (Legion like) than a public institution. Without a common understanding or vested interest in the men and women of the military, the American public remains a spectator while decisions are made on resourcing and employing the force. This Strategy Research Project demonstrates how the demographics of our nation's military contribute to the civil-military gap and outlines the challenges the gap creates. It offers recommendations for narrowing the gap and warns of future challenges if the situation does not improve.

A LEGION APART

For as long as had been recorded, the defense of the Roman Empire was the responsibility of its citizens. In times of trouble, armed volunteers (usually landowners) mobilized, assembled, and trained to meet the challenge of the day. After victory had been won, the men of the legions went back to their civilian lives and a very small force remained garrisoned inside the walls of the cities. Near the end of the second century, B.C., the legions of ancient Rome underwent a major transformation. Under the direction of Gaius Marius, the legions became a full time professional force.¹

In Marius' reforms, citizens were asked to join a legion as full time soldiers with the promise of steady pay and opportunities for plunder or other battlefield spoils. Men, especially from the empire's poorest classes, took advantage of this opportunity. Upon joining the legion, these men would swear an oath of allegiance. This oath, called *sacramentum*, "changed the status of the man entirely."² He was now utterly subject to his general's authority, and had thereby laid down any restraints of his former civilian life. While a soldier, the legionary lived a life that was totally separated from the civilian existence of other Romans. He would not spend his time as a town garrison, but in military camp, miles away from civilization. Their military was now so separate from Roman civilians, that in their minds, the legionary was no longer a citizen, but more of a tool, or a machine.³

The legionary could only be released from the *sacramentum* by two things; death or demobilization. From the time he took the oath, until such time as he was released from service, a legionary was sworn to his generals to be used as the generals saw fit. For legionary, swearing the oath to something bigger than themselves not only changed

simple citizens into different beings, it also transformed the legions into professional formations very different and distant from the citizens they now protected.⁴

The new professional Roman legions were used with great success to expand the empire and gain reputations for their generals. However, they were so separated from the average Roman citizens that their loyalty, and in fact their very oath, was really only to their generals. To a great degree, the Roman Legions lost their connection to the Roman people and to Rome itself.

Today in America there are both political and military leaders who have sounded the alarm that the U.S. military has become something like a legion itself. The professional All-Volunteer military has lost much of its connection to the rest of the nation. A civil-military gap has opened and it has been defined along multiple lines to include: regional identity, economic background, values/beliefs, and race/ethnicity. Many fear that the military no longer represents the broader nation it is sworn to protect. Similar to the legions of Rome, it has become a professional and somewhat private force and therefore the citizens of America have much less accountability for how the military is used. Further complicating this circumstance is the fact that currently only 120 members of Congress have served in the military, (95 in the House, and 25 in the Senate). In comparison, there were 398 veterans (329 Representatives, 69 Senators) in Congress around the time the Vietnam Conflict ended.⁵ Ironically, one of the most vocal national leaders who have expressed concern about part of this gap is Congressman Charles Rangel of New York.

I dare anyone to try to convince me that this war is not being fought predominantly by tough, loyal, and patriotic young men and women from the barren hills and towns of rural and underprivileged neighborhoods in urban America where unemployment is high and opportunities are few.

As we see who are the troops coming home wounded and killed, I challenge anyone to tell me that the wealthiest have not been excluded from that roll call.⁶

Representative Rangel is a combat veteran of the Korean War and the recipient of both The Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.⁷ When he comments about military service as in the quotation above, he speaks from a position of both experience and strength. His service and personal sacrifice demand attention, but is he correct?

Who is actually filling the ranks of our nation's military? Are the members of our military so different from the public at large? Are the rich avoiding service? Are the underprivileged of our society doing the fighting for the nation? If so, what are the strategic implications of that fact, and what can or should be done to correct it? What are the effects of this separation (perceived or actual) between citizens and their Soldiers, and how does that dynamic impact current levels of public support for the military? In a country with a representative government, should the military that is sworn to defend it more closely represent the people of the nation?

This Strategy Research Project attempts to answer these questions. By better understanding the demographic composition of the military in comparison to the nation's demographic, senior governmental and military leaders will not only better understand the alleged civil-military gap, they will also better understand and anticipate future challenges as current conflicts are ending and the military downsizes. While the entire U.S. military is examined throughout this paper, the Army, which accounts for 40% of all servicemen, will dominate most examples presented and examined.

More Leaders Speak on the Divide

In September 2010, Defense Secretary Robert Gates delivered a speech at Duke University in which he expressed his concerns about the growing gap between those

who serve in the military and the general American public. The “tiny sliver” of the American people who serve constitutes less than 1 % of the population.⁸ While that is a startling metric, Secretary Gates’ real concern is not the numbers, but more the loss of a relationship of shared social, cultural and financial understanding of the cost of service. While Mr. Gates expressed his concerns in terms of a lack of understanding and empathy, others have charged that the civil-military gap goes so far as the military and the American people ...”looking at each other with growing uneasiness and across a widening philosophical, ideological, political, and even religious social gap.”⁹

President Obama addressed the issue himself while just a candidate. He stressed the importance of “military service as an obligation not just of some, but of many.” The future President told students at Columbia University, “You know, I traveled, obviously, a lot over the last 19 months. And if you go to small towns, throughout the Midwest or the Southwest or the South, every town has tons of young people who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. That is not always the case in other parts of the country, in more urban centers.”¹⁰

The Congressman, the Commander in Chief, and the Secretary of Defense publicly shared concerns about the divide between those serving and the public they serve. Each defined that divide with different metrics. The President: geographic representation, Secretary Gates: social understanding and awareness, and Congressman Rangel: economic backgrounds. Which leader is right? Are they all? Are none of them correct? How long has this perceived gap existed?

All Volunteer Force vs the Draft

In the Federalist Paper #26, one of the documents that helped shape the drafting of the Constitution, Alexander Hamilton expressed the sentiment our Nation’s Founders

had of a peace-time Army. "...the people of America may be said to have derived an hereditary impression of danger to liberty, from standing armies in time of peace."¹¹

Throughout our history, when severely threatened (the Civil War, World War I and World War II), America drafted a sufficient Army to accomplish the task at hand. At the cessation of hostilities, that expanded force was quickly released back to the civilian work population, and in keeping with the note of caution from Hamilton, only a small professional Army remained for peace time requirements.¹² During war, the size of America's maritime forces (The Navy and Marine Corps) also expanded, but even in peacetime the country maintained a substantial sea-borne arm.

The most recent draft came back into effect in 1948, shortly after the massive military of World War II, consisting of both volunteers and conscripts had returned to civilian capacities.¹³ Despite the fact that it was officially a time of peace, the draft was deemed necessary in order to maintain the large force that the Cold War standoff with the Soviet Union seemed to demand.¹⁴ This first-ever "peacetime" draft remained in effect through the conflicts in both Korea and Vietnam. In theory, the draft meant service members came from all corners of the country and all walks of life. During that period, even celebrities like Elvis Presley were subject to the draft, and he served an Army tour in Europe.¹⁵

By the middle of the Vietnam War, a major contributor to that conflict's unpopularity was the exemption or deferment process and the idea that the war was being fought predominately by those who could not afford or arrange other opportunities like college. At that time, of the 17 million men in the potential draft pool, nearly two-thirds had received some sort of deferment or were deemed ineligible.¹⁶ "Young men

found all sorts of ways to get out of the draft - getting draft deferments by staying in college and graduate school, finding ways to fail their medical examinations, applying for conscientious objector status. Those most likely to use these tactics came from the better educated and wealthier families. In other words, the draft laws were not being equitably applied, and those disproportionately paying the price were the less educated and less well-off.”¹⁷

In response to both the unpopularity of the war in Vietnam, and the unfairness of the draft process, 1968 Presidential candidate, Richard Nixon, promised to end the draft if he were elected. In 1973, as President, Nixon kept that campaign promise and ushered in the All-Volunteer Force that exists today.¹⁸ As testament to how hard it was to make such a major change in the way the nation manned its military, it took 5 ½ years from promise to the start of the policy.¹⁹ Nixon was careful not to burden the force with this new variable until American involvement in Vietnam was ending. By declaring the American Military an All-Volunteer Force, the draft inequities went away and the nation was to be protected by only those who desired to serve.

America is approaching 40 years of volunteer-supplied defense. That amount of time is greater than the total number of years the country was ever armed by a conscripted force.²⁰ In that time, multiple studies have been conducted on the impact and sustainability of the All-Volunteer Force. At the 10 year mark, the results were mixed and the going was described as “rough”. By the 30 year mark, Nixon’s decision was hailed as brilliant, and the force it generated as the best ever in history. The 30 year report did however caution that this force of volunteers hadn’t been fully tested in a sustained campaign.²¹ The Global War on Terror was in only its second year at the time

of that 2003 report. As the 40th anniversary of Nixon's decision approaches, the All Voluntary Force has seen a decade of war which has had an impact on the composition of the force. To answer the concerns of the senior leaders mentioned above, it is important to understand who currently serves in the nation's military.

Regional Identity

At the time the draft ended, only one generation removed from World War II, most American families had a direct connection to the military, or to someone who had served in the military. In that generation, and those before it, "serving the country was a normal rite of passage."²² In the period of time since then, that situation has drastically changed. Today it is a much smaller and rather isolated group of American citizens who serve. This means most Americans have little or no connection to their military. Despite major population densities in the Northeast and Midwest, America's military has of late been coming from the South and from rural areas like the Mountain West. Heritage Foundation studies in 2005 and 2006 that compared population densities with military recruiting data found states like Georgia, Mississippi, Montana, and Wyoming over represented in the American armed forces, while New York, Massachusetts, Michigan and Illinois were considerably under-represented.²³

At least the Southern portion of the military's geographic identity appears to be nothing new. A "Southern Military Tradition" has been acknowledged since some of the earliest analysis of the All-Volunteer Force, and even under the draft, "there were too many Southerners and not enough New Englanders then" compared to those regions' population densities.²⁴

Additionally, in a study from 2005, the Chicago Tribune cited a statistic that 35% of those killed in Iraq and Afghanistan were from small, rural towns, while only 25% of

the U.S. population lives in those same sized towns.²⁵ Congressman Rangel appears to be only half-right. Perhaps he threw the “urban” part into his rhetoric in order to appeal to his own New York constituents. Unfortunately, the Heritage Foundation’s data shows that enlistments from his state actually dropped between 1999 and 2003, despite the strong emotional link to the attacks of September 11, 2001 in New York City.

Another telling indicator associated with regional and geographic dynamics centers on the location of the majority of Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. The preponderance of these programs are prevalent in Western and Southern colleges, but not in the large numbers of universities in the Northeast. A study on the lack of ROTC opportunities in and around New York City points out that in the nation’s largest city, with a population of over 8 million, there are only four schools that host ROTC detachments. A state with a population comparable to New York City is Virginia. Virginia alone has 20 ROTC programs in institutions of higher education, while even further south, in Alabama, with a population of only 4.7 million, there are 10.²⁶

This degree of regional disparity with regards to ROTC programs wasn’t always the case. In 1956, Princeton, an elite Ivy League University in New Jersey, saw 400 of its 750 graduates enter the military.²⁷ America’s war in Vietnam, and the campus-based anti-war sentiment, was a catalyst for many colleges and universities to drop ROTC. When that anti-war and/or anti-military sentiment waned, the law preventing openly gay men and women from serving in the military became a new reason that many schools used to prevent the programs from returning to their campuses. Now that the “don’t ask, don’t tell,” policy which barred homosexuals from openly serving, has

been rescinded, students, faculty, and administrators at many colleges, especially in the Northeast, are once again supportive of ROTC.²⁸

Similar to the location of the majority of ROTC programs, another manifestation of this geographical isolation has to do with the location of many military bases and installations. The Navy and Marine Corps continue to operate from the same dozen or so coastal states that they have since the nation's founding. Although with considerably fewer bases since the end of the Cold War, the Air Force still has active duty bases in 35 of the 50 states and in the District of Columbia.²⁹ The Army, however, with 40% of the nation's active-duty force, through consolidation and multiple base closings, has largely moved to the Sun Belt over the past few decades. Collectively, 70% of all Americans in uniform reside in just 10 states.³⁰

The shrinking of the post-Cold-War military has increased the geographical and political isolation of the military. The current situation is similar to the period between the World Wars when "the majority of military posts were located in the South and in the West."³¹ The closing of bases has had a profound influence in the Far West (read California) and the Northeast. These two areas are not only densely populated, but lean to the left socially and politically.³² With few or no military bases, citizens in these regions not only don't interact with military personnel very much, but their local economy misses out on the steady income and spending of military members. Since the end of the Cold War, the military has also privatized much of its logistics "tail" which has resulted in the closure of many small depots and arsenals. While those facilities didn't account for large numbers of servicemen and women, the small installations were key links between communities/regions and the military.³³

Economic Background

Besides being only partially correct on the geographic representation of our military, Congressman Rangel is also somewhat wrong about the economic background of the enlistees. Based on the zip codes of where military recruits are coming from, and the average family income of that area, the data disputes the congressman's claim. In 1999, the average household income for recruits was \$41,141 while the general population's average income was just slightly better at \$44,994. The Middle Class seems to actually be where most recruits come from.³⁴

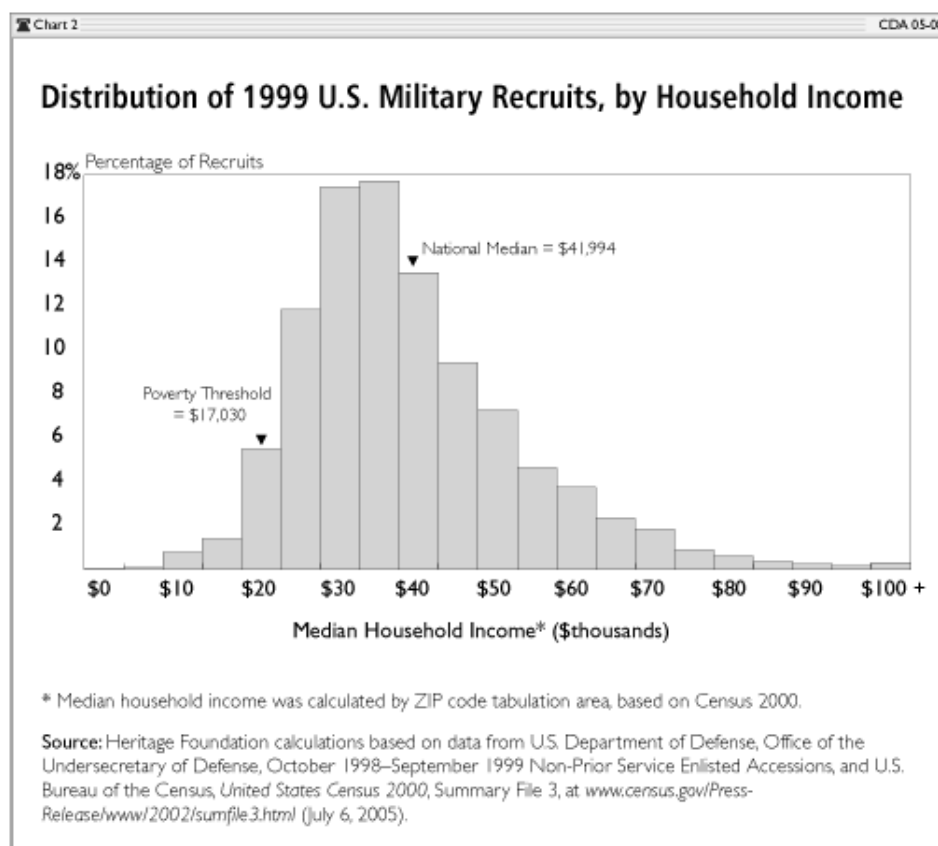


Figure 1:

No matter how one looks at the data, Mr. Rangel is correct when he says the wealthiest are not serving. Since 9-11, the percentage of enlistments from the richest

portion of the country has slightly increased, but for the most part, “members of the military are strangers to the upper classes and it seems privileged folks want to keep it that way”.³⁵ To make sure their children do not even have to be asked to consider serving in the military, some wealthy communities have taken measures to ban recruiters from their schools and even their towns.³⁶

Politics and Values

During the political and legal battles over the issue of gays in the military, Congress specifically used language that outlined the difference between military and civilian existence.

“Military life is fundamentally different from civilian life. Because of the unique conditions service members face and the unique responsibilities that military service entails, the military community constitutes a specialized society governed by its own laws, rules, customs, and traditions, including restrictions on personal behavior that would be unacceptable in civilian society. Standards of conduct apply to military members at all times, whether on or off duty, whether on or off base”.³⁷

The Army prides itself in internalizing seven core values that identify what it means to be a Soldier. These stated values are: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. Such concepts do not resonate much at all in civilian life and especially among Soldiers’ peers in colleges. To those in uniform, living by values much different than their civilian counterparts is a point of pride and yet another way in which the military is set apart from the average citizen.

Professor Richard Kohn described the values-based attitude of the military this way, “I sense an ethos that is different. They talk about themselves as ‘we’, separate from society. They see themselves as different, morally and culturally.”³⁸ At times the pride of living by different (read higher) standards of personal conduct takes on the form of righteous indignation.....even against the Commander in Chief.

In 1998, when the news broke about President Clinton's affair with an intern, many in the civilian world were disappointed, but dismissed the act as simply consensual behavior between two adults. In their eyes, it certainly was not something that disqualified him from serving as the President. Within the military, the internal dialog centered on how that same conduct (Adultery) by one of the President's military subordinates is illegal and could lead to a court martial under article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.³⁹ Besides the legal discussions, these differences in values also extend to religion. The military tends to be more religious than the rest of America and takes pride in higher moral values than society.⁴⁰

In step with the faith and values ingrained in so many who serve is a politically conservative identity. As outlined above, today's recruits predominantly come from the Mountain West and the South. Since they are likely to be stationed right back in one of these *Red States*,⁴¹ it is almost a natural progression for the military to have taken on a conservative mindset. That wasn't always the case. As an example, at the time the draft ended, the political views of Cadets and Midshipmen at West Point and Annapolis were very similar to their civilian peers in college. At that time, many would not even declare a political identity, choosing to state in conversations that they proudly remained neutral. Recently, those same officers-in-training have been identifying themselves as republicans.⁴² Their cohorts from ROTC programs mostly located in the South and Mountain West reflect similar outlooks. Now, the entire military is predominantly conservative, and studies show that like the cadets and midshipmen, the officer corps is very much so.⁴³

A Family Business

Another factor contributing to the divide between America's legionary and their citizens is the fact that many new recruits come from families who already have a tradition of military service. "The job of putting on the uniform has become an almost tribal one: a growing share of active-duty troops has a sibling or a parent in uniform."⁴⁴ A Pew Research Center survey released in November of last year appears to confirm that for many Americans, military service is a family tradition. Relatives of veterans are more are inclined to serve and 79% of veterans surveyed reported that an immediate family member is serving or has served in the military. That compares to 61 % among the civilian respondents.⁴⁵ "In addition, those who have an immediate family member who served in the military are somewhat more likely than those who do not to say they would recommend a career in the military. Half (51%) of those with a family member who served say they would advise a young person close to them to join the military. This compares with 43% of those who do not have a military relative. Among veterans themselves, 75% say they would recommend a career in the military."⁴⁶

Race/Ethnic Identity

In all the discussions about the civil-military divide, one refreshing bit of information is that there is not much of a difference between the racial and ethnic background of the overall military and that of the civilian population. For political points, some have attempted to spin enlistment data to demonstrate that there is a race and/or class divide in who is serving the nation. Data from Heritage Center studies shows that military recruits who identify themselves as white or black are represented in numbers very close to their percentage of the American population. Asian-Americans are

underrepresented and American Indians and Pacific Islanders are over represented, but in general, minorities as a whole are on par with the general population.⁴⁷

Who Actually Fights

While the military's ethnic demographics are very similar to America's, the statistics of who does the actual fighting is not. Some of the same pundits, who are wrong about the composition of the military, also do not have their facts straight when they try to use casualty numbers and the risk of becoming a casualty in combat to score political points. For their followers, they have attempted to paint a picture of a situation where minorities and/or other hard pressed recruits have no choice but to man the front lines and execute the most dangerous tasks. Congressman Rangel's comments above smack of some of that rhetoric. Others are more blunt. Jesse Jackson, addressing a mostly black audience on the eve of the First Gulf War, is quoted as saying "when War breaks out, our youth will burn first."⁴⁸ While it makes for good headlines and can help to fire up a crowd, data shows there is no validity to it.

Even when the military was manned by conscripts, the notion that minorities and/or underprivileged did the dying for the country was false. In Vietnam, at a time when so many "privileged" were finding ways to get out of the draft, black servicemen were killed at a rate below that of the general population. 12.5% of combat fatalities were black while they made up 13.1 % of the U.S. population.⁴⁹ In today's Army, minorities tend to be underrepresented in the combat arms and African Americans disproportionately serve in combat service support units. In the infantry, where the most casualties normally occur, they comprise just 9 % while making up 30 % of the Army as a whole. Additionally, other high-risk occupations within the military such as pilots and special operators are very white.⁵⁰

Perhaps because it could be construed as questioning bravery, the military is very hesitant to challenge this false rhetoric. Surveys show that this disparity in the racial and ethnic composition of certain specialties has everything to do with why men and women volunteer to serve and what they hope to learn while in uniform. It has nothing to do with risk avoidance. The unwillingness of the military to enter the dialog, even to refute inflammatory non-truths, compounds the social separation that Secretary Gates warned the Duke students about. Even when portions of the public spout blatantly wrong information about military demographics, the legion's silence contributes to the situation by not correcting perceptions to help the public know their guardians better.

America Loves her Legion

Despite the fact that the military has drifted away from the civilian population in demographics and understanding, there has been no drift in the public's support for their defenders. In data released by the Pew Research Center in October, 71% of the general public admitted they don't understand the problems faced by the military but greater than 90% "express pride in the troops, and three-quarters say they have thanked someone in the military."⁵¹ This praise also takes on an air of empathy as 83% of surveyed adults say that military personnel and their families have had to make a lot of sacrifices during this period of conflict. The pride and praise America has for her military translates to trust in abilities as well. The military enjoys very high levels of confidence by the public which is opposite their feelings about most other national institutions.⁵²

While the support the military enjoys from the American public is overwhelming, the fact that 71% of the population don't understand the military demands attention.

This uninformed portion of the populace is the largest contributing factor to the civil-military gap. Since the military no longer represents the broader nation, it truly is a legion apart. The nation at large is neither connected to, nor knowledgeable about, the military. That situation means the people have much less motivation to be concerned about how their guardians are manned, equipped, and used. Their elected leaders are responsible for those three concerns, but it is a voting and vocal public who can hold them accountable for doing it.

Closing the Gap

Even though he is no longer the Secretary of Defense, part of Mr. Gates' warning at Duke should be taken as implied marching orders. The military must reconnect with the public. The civilian population has neither the motivation to bridge the divide, nor the organization and structure to do so. The first step is for the military to do a much better job of telling its story.

The initial audience that the military must better educate is the body of elected leaders who are ultimately responsible for readiness. As mentioned, the numbers of veterans in congress is shrinking. In tough economic times, federal budgets cannot cover every need. Defense spending accounts for a quarter of the federal budget.⁵³ Unless Congressmen better understand the military and its needs, that slice of the budgetary pie will always be an easy place to start cutting. Some of the services do a better job than others explaining themselves to Congress, but each must improve going forward.

The second audience that must be made to better understand the military is the American public. The military enjoys great support and even empathy from the public for its service and sacrifice. Despite frustration over a decade of fighting, the public has

been extremely hesitant to hold government leaders accountable for such a sustained period of the use of force. In fact, while acknowledging the discrepancy in what the military has been asked to do compared to no requests of the civilian sector, 70% of the public feels that this prolonged commitment is just part of being in the military.⁵⁴ Some even believe that since the military is manned by volunteers that service members actually enjoy war.⁵⁵

Only through an educational process, can the public move past ambivalence and potentially speak up for the military. The Pew Center numbers indicate that some 23% pity the military and the sacrifice it has had to make.⁵⁶ Any process to educate the public must avoid adding to that number as well. Rather than viewing the military through a sympathetic lens, a knowledgeable public can better weigh in on decisions about the force, even in peacetime. Currently, “voters support sweeping cuts of federal spending and believe that defense can be cut, as there is no sense that the U.S. is at risk in a way that requires more defense spending.”⁵⁷ The public does not need her guardians crying wolf, but they do need to know what it takes to keep the threats at bay.

Current budget constraints will be paired with an obligatory reduction in the size of the military. The completion of military operations in Iraq this past December, coupled with the President’s declaration that the Afghanistan mission will end in the next two years, and the new national strategic focus on the less-manpower-intensive Asia Pacific Theater, all signal a smaller force⁵⁸. Both the Army and Marine Corps grew during the past 10 years of war, and that growth will likely be the first thing cut. While shrinking in size, the military must ensure both the public and congress do not allow modernization and planning for the future to shrink as well.

The 1990s saw a decade of relative peace and a smaller military following the Cold War. In keeping with American tradition, the peacetime Army was out of sight and out of mind. Following this period of public and congressional ambivalence, ground forces entered the post-9-11 conflicts equipped much like they were in the first Gulf War 10 years earlier... short of night vision equipment, body armor, and mine-resistant armored vehicles. If most American families, and American congressmen do not personally know the young men and women who must operate without that equipment, it is much harder for them to recognize the need to make sure they are purchased, fielded, and trained with before a conflict starts.

Reinstate the Draft?

Some say another way to bridge the gap between the guardians and the guarded is to reinstate the draft. Congressman Rangel is possibly the loudest voice in that choir, but current data shows it is a rather small ensemble. A poll in October of last year indicated that 68% of veterans, and 74% of the general public opposed a return to conscription.⁵⁹ Among his peers, the congressman's ideas are not getting traction either. Rangel's 2004 bill to reinstate the draft failed in the House of Representatives by a decisive vote of 402 to 2.⁶⁰

Recruiting

Current enlistment statistics indicate an overrepresentation of Soldiers from Southern and Mountain West regions. Major Larry Dillard, assigned to the Army's Recruiting command summed up the current challenge: "The question is, how can we get our stories out to urban centers where most of the population lives, but where we don't have a big presence"?⁶¹ As the conflicts draw to a close and the military downsizes, the time is right to re-focus recruiting efforts into population centers,

specifically in the northeast, in order to better represent the nation. The Nation's urban areas currently have recruiters, but not in sufficient numbers to fully reach the large population they cover. For example, The Army's recruiting battalion in the New York City area has 270 members to cover a reported pool of 10 million people, or just over 37,000 citizens for every possible recruiter. By comparison, the Milwaukee-based battalion has nearly as many recruiters (235) for a population pool significantly smaller.⁶² Boston, on the other hand, is lumped into a single battalion for the entire New England area.

Simply throwing more people at the problem will not be a cure-all. As the military shrinks, it may be time to assume some risk in the over-represented regions where values, tradition, and family mentorship will likely keep volunteers coming to a smaller number of recruiting centers. That shift would allow for an increase in recruiters into urban areas. Results will be slow in coming since new recruits are a small percentage of the total military, but through retention, these new service members will slowly change the demographic of the force. Statistics show that their sons and daughters will be much more likely to follow them into the service as well.

ROTC Changes

Similar to recruiting efforts, the locations of ROTC programs must migrate back into major population centers, especially in the Northeast region. As colleges and universities who until recently were hostile to hosting ROTC programs begin to open their doors to the military, the military must be prepared to jump start these new programs. Without a recent history of conducting training, the military should have a pre-designed training package that accounts for multiple institutions within the same

urban center. The Army could also help them share facilities and equipment (ranges, weapons, vehicles, etc.) that already are present in reserve component units.

In order to prevent current successful and proud ROTC programs in rural areas from having to close, a larger number of their graduates should be commissioned in the National Guard and Army Reserve so the state and local units will still benefit from the education and commissioning of their local sons and daughters. If shrinking end strengths of those reserve component units cannot facilitate as many new officers, some graduates could be assigned straight to the Individual Ready Reserve. They would be available in a crisis, but in the meantime, would have a civilian career and be able to share knowledge of the military with co-workers.

Conclusion

The military faces a near future with next to no peer competitors but multiple asymmetric and indirect threats. America is slow to anger and non-militaristic, so barring an emotional event, the military should expect another period of near-neglect. Without specific campaigns to become more representative of the broader American public, the military will remain and become an even more isolated society. The legion is loved because it is so capable and demands little attention. Far better for the nation is a force in the forefront of the public's mind because it mirrors society and all citizens have a close relationship with a legionary.

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